

**REMARKS**

Claims 23-30 and 32-36 are pending in this application. Applicant appreciates the Office Action's indication that the claims would distinguish the prior art of record if amended to recite "wherein the rendezvous circuit performs a function so that a next transaction of sending and receiving request and acknowledge signals is not started until all the transactions that are in progress have ended." By this Amendment, claim 23 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 31, and claim 31 is canceled. Claim 23 is also amended to recite "wherein the rendezvous circuit performs a function so that a next transaction of sending and receiving request and acknowledge signals is not started until all the transactions that are in progress have ended," as the Examiner suggested. Support for this Amendment can be found in Applicant's specification on page 12, line 23 - page 13, line 6, and original claim 31 for example. No new matter is added by this Amendment. Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because e.g. they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 23-30, 33 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0043175 to Yasukawa in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,544,342 to Dean. The Office Action rejects claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yasukawa in view of Dean and U.S. Patent No. 6,128,678 to Masteller. The Office Action rejects claims 32, 34 and 36 under 35 U.S.C.

§103(a) as being unpatentable over Yasukawa in view of Dean and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0132896 to Matsueda. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 23 is amended to incorporate the features of dependent claim 31, and the subject matter suggested by the Examiner. The applied references do not disclose or render obvious the subject matter recited in claim 23, as amended. In particular, claim 23 is amended to recite wherein the peripheral circuit further includes a rendezvous circuit, and data received by the second port is input to the rendezvous circuit.

In particular, as the Examiner recognized and implied in paragraph 6, "Response to Arguments," of the outstanding Office Action, the prior art of Yasukawa, Dean, Masteller, and Matsueda do not disclose or suggest the feature comprising a "rendezvous circuit" of claim 23, to which data received by the second port is input, and which has the function where a next transaction of sending and receiving request and acknowledge signals is not started until all the transactions that are in progress have ended. Claim 23 has been amended as the Examiner suggested. Thus, claim 23 is patentable over the applied references. Claims 24-30 and 32-36 are also patentable at least in view of the patentability of claim 23 from which they depend, as well as from additional features they recite. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

It is also noted that it is improper to reject claims 32, 34 and 36 over Matsueda. Matsueda is published on June 17, 2003 after the priority date of the present application. Thus, Matsueda only qualifies as a reference under §102(e). However, Matsueda is also assigned to the same assignee as the present application. Thus, under §103(c), it is improper to apply Matsueda in a §103(a) rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 23-30 and 32-36 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: November 2, 2009

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